She does no work in the farm or kitchen. She always has an ebisa to wait on her. If her family has no member they can let her have, she will borrow an ebisa from a distant relative or a friend.

A nkɔndɛ́ does not travel on foot; she is carried in a hammock (hunting net). Her husband accompanies her on foot, however. But this was done only for a true nkɔndɛ́ of a rich man, and the custom is disappearing today.

A favorite may not leave her husband, even to go and see her parents. In the past some men were so jealous of their favorites that they would not allow them to satisfy even their most private needs unless they themselves or some sentinel (usually a lɔtswɛ́) stood watch. A man could not even go into the vicinity of her hut, which is built just behind the husband's shed. For although the husband is sometimes tolerant of the passions of his other wives, he always shows an intransigeant jealousy [346] in relation to his favorite. He never travels without having her accompany him.

The favorite has the honor of performing small personal services for her husband; she cuts his hair, helps him in the removal of body hair, scratches his pustules from ringworm or prickly heat, anoints him with oil, paints him with ngɔ́la, and, in a word, performs all the tasks connected with his appearance and hygiene.

Out of love for his favorite, her husband can buy her corpse for the price of a slave (in kind or in money). By doing so he obtains the right to have it buried beside his own while those of the other wives must be buried with their native clans. That is why in some regions a husband calls his favorite his ikundaka (from kunda "to bury"). Nevertheless, if her husband dies before she does, his heirs may not trouble themselves about his wishes and no longer require that the favorite be buried in their cemetery. That is what happened to Bongɔ́la of Bongɛ́li, whose husband Ikilinganya of Bongangɛ (Bokɔndɛ́) had paid the price of two slaves for this right. When the husband has killed large game, the favorite, like the bomɔ́tsa, has the right to receive her personal predetermined portion (lɔando). Her part is the neck or a chop, which in her absence, goes to the sons or their wives. The other wives do not have the same right; each one obtains only an ordinary piece (lɔondo).

764 Before proceeding with the burial, the two families settle the question of funeral payments, which we are about to examine. A "farewell feast" is given by the clan of the deceased. The interment itself has no special features, so that it will suffice to refer the reader to the study of this subject that has been cited.

766 As we noted in Chapter VII, Article II, a husband can buy the corpse of his favorite. Unless the execution of this intention meets with some obstacle, the corpse is not transported to the favorite's native clan but is buried next to the husband's tomb in his clan cemetery. As a result, all that accompanies the transporting of the corpse is omitted, as is the funeral payment which is compensated for by the purchase of the corpse. The husband or his family only send the wife's relatives the payment that usually accompanies the news of her death.

Article IV. Funeral Payments

764 As we have just said, before the husband proceeds with the transportation of a deceased wife's corpse, he collects the valuables to pay the nkunji. This is the term (derived from the verb kunda, "to bury") that designates the various payments a widower is required to make to the clan of the deceased.

First of all, as soon as the death is known, the nkonga goes to the parents of the deceased and brings them the nsango (news), which consists of a copper ring or a knife. He presents them with these, saying: "Know that your daughter so-and-so has just died."

At every barrier the procession must cross to reach the village of the deceased, the husband must make payment of some object [431] (usually a knife or a ring) in order to obtain free passage. [98] The nkonga always serves as intermediary. These payments are called by'ɔ́ɔ by'ɔkɔ́kɔ or simply lokɔ́kɔ, lokɔ́kɔka (barrier), or, among the Bombwanja, ifɛkɛ́ yɛ́ ekɔ́kɔki, "knife for felling (the barrier)."

The nkonga walks at the head of the funeral procession; he (or another lɔmɔmbɔ́rwɛ́ who takes his place) carries a spear

[97] [84] already more "civilized," such as the neighborhood of Coquilhatville and the Lesanganya region.

[97] [99] Attention should be drawn to the danger of an increase in abortions for a new reason, namely the shame of giving birth outside of wedlock. As we have seen in Chapter I, Part II, Article IV, 3, premarital pregnancies have existed since time immemorial without resulting either in remorse or in palavers. Through the teaching of Christian morality, the feeling of shame must sooner or later be extended to this phenomenon. In explaining the evil of fornication, care should therefore be taken to insist on the fact that transgressing the Fifth Commandment by abortion is a far greater evil.

[97] [95] Voluntary abortion is not considered a moral error by the Nkundó. (2) In their eyes an imperfectly formed fetus, not viable,

2. An attitude which also exists in Europe at the present time, according to Haenecour in Kultuurleven, Vol. 6, no. 1, p. 21 (1938), and the brochure by Prof. D. Schockaert quoted there.

is not yet a man. It is only a human being in the process of formation, in potentia. Hence the custom of burying the aborted child in the [468] hut or quite near it. Thus the spirit responsible for the [97] [96] [78] pregnancy will see that it is respected and repeat its benevolent action. (1)

1. Others explain this custom by saying that the fetus already has a soul which remains near the tiny body and will take the first opportunity to re-enter the mother's body.

But if it is voluntary an abortion is always a wrong against family and society, for it deprives the family of a member on whom

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must go to the *mudindo* for their fight, this being the location of the houses belonging to the sons of the *nkumu*. The penalty for breaking this law is a fine, and if no fine were forthcoming hanging used to be the alternative. If a quarrel arises elsewhere and one party wishes to avoid fighting, he may retire to the *mugo* and thus be safe. No trees in the *mugo* may be climbed. There are, however, privileged classes exempt from all such rules, and these embrace a good many people. Thus, the mother of twins, twins, Batwa, *mamei*, and all members of the *mukondo* and *ekpio* are exempt from the laws of the *mugo*. If any of these commit acts which are illegal for those coming under the law, they are not held guilty, but their actions will not be condoned; they will be considered breaches of good conduct, and will be dealt with informally; the parties will be quietly reprimanded, and adjured to observe the proprieties of conduct. For outsiders breaking the laws of the *mugo*, what corresponds to a warrant is necessary. It is necessary to catch the culprit in the act and hale him before the *nkumu*. The *nkumu* himself cannot do this, nor can any of the *ekpio*; it must be done by one of the *mukondo*, and so if the *nkumu* sees someone infringing the law he will try to get one of the *mukondo* on the spot in a hurry in order to catch the offender.

In war,[1] it is the *mukoni a ele* who is most active in preparations, but the *nkumu* will accompany his party to battle, keeping well in the rear, and surrounded by good fighters. He does not wear his *mumbi* but puts on the informal hat. If an *nkumu* were captured, he would never be tortured or killed as were other prisoners, unless he specifically sought such a fate. He could be ransomed, and his captors would beseech him to let his people ransom him, but in many cases an *nkumu* would invite death rather than endure the shame of being yielded up as a prisoner of war.

An *nkumu* is always addressed by a double clap of the hands, and will not reply to anyone rude enough to speak to him first. In answer to the clap he replies with a word of wisdom expressed in an aphorism or proverb. Such a reply, however, is common to all elders, who have their favourite aphorisms ready for any who pay them special honour. Anything the *nkumu* says must be answered not by the customary *ndo kaka* (even so) which ordinary people use, but with the special word, *kongo*, which is reserved exclusively for replying to an *nkumu*, and means the same thing.

When the hour of death approaches, an *nkumu* is attended by his Batwa. It is a rule that he must not die a natural death, and near the end, while he is still conscious and can still speak, all "free men" clear out and leave the Batwa pygmies to their task of tying the *nkumu* very tightly with the fibrous yam vines known as *mankiki*. Often this severe lashing in the sitting posture, known as *ilima*, is sufficient to finish the *nkumu* off, but sometimes the work is expedited by twisting his neck.[2] Then it is announced that he is dead, *ankilwa*, this being in contradistinction to the customary phrase *nokomo mokolo* used of the death of ordinary people. While the latter means

[1] Owing to the lack of tribal cohesion, warfare was not on any considerable scale. The method of warfare consisted in sending groups of young men to fight duels, the oldest only joining in when one side began to get the worst of the fray. Victors and vanquished in such fights were designated "husband" and "wife" respectively, and members of the one group were free to come and go in the villages of the other, and even to help themselves to food. In future wars "husband" and "wife" were supposed to combine against their common foes.

[2] Besides *nkumu*, elderly and rich men, fathers and mothers of twins, and twins are buried in the *ilima* or sitting position, in contradistinction to the *mongolo* position which is the recumbent one used for ordinary people and slaves.

literally that the deceased has hanged the heart, the former is used of a tree which leans over and falls from a great cut at its base.

On the announcement of the death, an expert drummer drums out the news. There will be at least four drums of the type known as *lokole*, and a *nsango*.[1] The four drums are called by the names, *Epunda*, having the 'biggest voice', that is a deep bass note, *Mongya*, having a higher note, *Mongunda*, a high pitched note, and *Mankete*, having a very high penetrating note. To these four drums others are added; if the *nkumu* himself did not possess sufficient, they would be borrowed from the surrounding villages, and their notes matched with those of the first three drums, being beaten with them in their turn. *Mankete* is beaten simultaneously with *Epunda*, giving a rhythmic tattoo. When the news of the death has been sent out on *Epunda*, the funeral drumming commences, as follows:

Mongunda.	Botiangana w'Amba lokolo,
Mongya.	Nsala ikim, ovongonoko,
Epunda.	Tokumf' ikenge nsokuni' o nyama,
	Osokolokoko nsasango,
	Lokenge lokunda nsundo,
	Bikoko lolunda lokolo.
Nsango.	Tokilaka nkui nkongo,
	Tokilaka nkui nkongo, &c.

The English and the interpretation are as follows:

Mongunda. A scattering of Amba, the snail. (The mother of twins, always called Amba, here gives her name to the snail because of her prolific progeny, which, upon being introduced to the world, scatter, while the mother dies. So the death of the *nkumu* will cause a scattering of his many wives and children.)

Mongya. Feathers fall; pick them up. (That is to say, for your arrow shafts, for if you don't, and come back later, the wind will have scattered them and you won't find them. So while the *nkumu* was alive it was the time for his children to learn his teachings so that when palavers came after his death they would be well acquainted with his wisdom and know how to settle them.)

Epunda. We are burying the *ikenge*, husband of animals, You have just eaten *nsango*, The chin looks up at the ridge pole, The jaw bones look up at the sky. (The *ikenge* is an animal much prized for its fat meat; the *nkumu* always gets his share when it is killed, and the skin is made into carrying straps for infants, and into belts. Bawa are prohibited the use of it for any purpose. It is therefore fitting to liken the *nkumu* to the *ikenge*. *Mosango* (sing. *Osango*) is the equivalent of a muscle. When a woman brings her cassava from the swamp where it has been soaking for several days, her husband may be too hungry to wait the long hours required to cook it, so to appease his hunger his wife takes a piece or two of the unprepared root, splits it in two, places salt between, wraps it in a *bekende* leaf and roasts it in the hot ashes, where it is quickly cooked. So the *nkumu* just had time to eat a few *nsango*; he didn't wait for the big cooking; his life was suddenly cut off.)

Nsango. Don't pull out the leopard's eyelashes. (That is, while he is alive; now he is dead one can disregard his power.)

[1] A *lokolo* is a slit gong made from a hollowed log. In two areas are produced by striking the two lips of the slit. A *nsango* is a hollowed log, open at one end, across which is stretched a vellum hide.

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This funeral drumming is kept up for a long time, off and on for days, and is very stirring in its rhythm. While it is going on, the elders congregate in an *ekunga*. They fast and have nothing to do with their wives during this time. The *ekpe* is mourning, and the *nsikombe* may be likewise mourning, but for the others it is a time of rejoicing, and also of the relaxing of moral restraints. It is an occasion for dancing by both Batwa and 'freemen', the former regarding this as a time for special rejoicing, for the *nkumu* was their master and now he is dead they are no longer under restraint. They are free to take any of their master's goods and even to snatch blankets off the corpse. Men and women do not dance together; the women, taking some of their husbands' weapons, go off in one direction, and the men, armed in finery, dance at the other end of the village.

While the *nkumu* is still unburied and the drumming is going on, the *nsikombe* look for a successor among the *ekpe*. Often this man will, as we have seen, have already been designated. The *nsikombe*, Batwa, and others in the village make up a party, and armed in war finery go off with their weapons as though after a man they wished to kill. As they go they sing:

Nkombe n'ngolita ekombe
W'e elak'ae ako?
Hawk, thou hast destroyed the nest,
Where art thou going to sleep?

Before catching the real successor they catch one or another in fun, singing this song. The man of course refuses to be *nkumu*, and the point of the song is that because of his refusal the *ekpe* no longer fulfils its function of supplying the *nsikombe* with *nkumu* and therefore ceases to be of any use to them. If this man by refusing thus destroys the family nest, where will they sleep?

Finally, after this fun, the real successor is caught, his face daubed with black, and the group sing:

Bole bo-o-o, bonde ekulu.
The cunning animal is hiding, reveal the tortoise.

Thus the new *nkumu*, like a cunning animal, is hiding, but when discovered, like the tortoise, he will not try to run away. The whole group conducts the new *nkumu* to the *ijumo* and sits all night guarding him. Earlier on the day of the actual interment of the dead *nkumu*, the new one is installed with ceremonies as already described.

On the day the *nkumu* dies his people scatter to other villages to look for slaves for the executions on the day of the burial. Slave-owners or husbands of unwanted wives ask quietly how much money there is for the men or women, except the agreed amounts, and tell the buyers to go quietly and catch the slave or wife before anything is suspected and no escape is made. In this connection we may note two classes of wives, *bapiko* and *ekun*. A third class, *bonsolo*, acquired by the payment of a very small bride price, was not nearly as common formerly as at present and may be passed by. A *bapiko* was a slave wife acquired by capture in war or stolen. If loved by her husband she will take her place practically on an equality with the members of the village, but she may be killed, for she is her husband's possession, "his money" in the native expression. An *ekun* is a wife for whom a very high bride price has been paid, obliging her family to give wives to the other family in perpetuity, supplying

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a successor to replace a deceased woman, and thus maintaining the balance between the two families. Such wives were seldom killed, for they had relatives who cared for them and would object, and who had the power to do so by refusing to fulfil their obligations and by retaining the bride price already received. The group of men and women gathered together for execution thus comprised males and *lupoko* women from the 'free' group (*bantu*, as applied to all men and women not Batwa), and Batwa men and women whose owners had consented to their death. It sometimes happened that a man, seeing a woman among this group who took his fancy, might obtain her by paying for her in money or substituting one of his own slaves.

In some cases the executioner, *komombo*, was chosen from among the family of the dead *okumu*, in others he was selected from among the whole group of people over which the *okumu* held sway. The man having been chosen, the knife is brought out of the house where it has been kept by some elder. This, a blade some sixteen inches in length, two-edged, decorated by alternating longitudinal lines of polished and blackened steel and inserted in a wooden handle, is sharpened on one edge, carefully wrapped in a plantain leaf, and laid away for use on the following day.

At dawn the prisoners are taken to the water and washed to clean them, island towns accomplishing this purpose by dragging them up and down the village in the dew-drenched grass tied by a liana. The prisoners then are arranged in a V shape, the apex nearest the spot where the *okumu*'s body is sitting in state. Low seats are made by resting a stick in the forks of two perpendicular ones, and this cross bar is straddled by the victim. His hands are tied behind his back and his head tied to a sapling securely fixed at one end in the ground, the other bent down sufficiently to allow for tying the head with considerable tension on the rope. When all is thus arranged an expert drummer begins to pound out a rhythmic beat, and the ceremony of handing over the knife takes place.

The executioner of the day is dressed in finery but no camwood powder is evident, for it is a time of mourning and not of rejoicing. He wears a hat with many feathers, a vine encircles his waist, and bracelets of the same his arms. Then the man who last occupied the position of executioner comes forward. An elder has already brought the knife wrapped in its leaf and also a heap of ash on a leaf, both of which are placed on the ground. The old executioner picks up the knife while the new one faces him. The former demonstrates with gestures how he used to go about his work, the motions, the attitudes, the fine arts of the task. Even though the executioner of the day may have had previous experience, this part of the ceremony must be gone through. Then, holding the knife aloft, the instructor raises his right leg at right angles to his body, bends it at the knee so that the shin hangs perpendicularly, and the new executioner passes underneath it, returning the same way. He now faces the old executioner, who lays the knife in his own hands, arms outstretched and palms open, the handle resting in his right palm, the blade in his left. The new man, facing his instructor, places his outstretched and open palms on the shoulders of the other, draws his hands down his arms, finally coming to the knife, which, because of its position is thus received, handle in the left hand, blade in the right. Releasing his right-hand grasp of the blade, he stoops, sprinkles the blade with some of the ash, then rubs his right hand in the dirt to remove all slippery sweat. Then still

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grasping the knife with his left hand, with his free right hand he draws a gourd of palm wine to gain courage, hits the nearest victim on the head with the empty gourd, then transfers the knife to his right hand. He is now ready for his work which he proceeds to dill methodically, sustained by the lively wine and the rhythm of the drum. When he had finished one of the lines, a pause would be made to bring out the body for burial. Just before this is done an armed band rushes down the path, returns, goes up in the other direction, then returns; this is said by some to ward off any spirits which might be about. The *nkumu* is now brought out by the Bateve slaves.[1] His grave, a circular hole with a crypt in one side of it, its entrance facing west, had been previously prepared. Few people in the Bongonda villages knew or had seen the actual burying place of an *nkumu*. While the corpse was carried to the grave followed by a crowd, the executioner finished his work. Those who stayed behind took the bodies of the decapitated men and women and divided them among all the participants of the funeral who would subsequently devour everything.

Accompanying the funeral procession to the grave were the *nkil*, one or more men or women who were destined to accompany the *nkumu* to his grave and to the other world beyond. At the burial of an *nkumu* witnessed in 1930 at which the semblances of some of the old rites were carried out, a party of armed men contested the right of the procession to approach the grave, there was a mock battle for a few minutes between two bands of the funeral party, and then the procession gained right of way. At the grave-side the legs and sometimes the arms of one *nkil* were broken by heavy clubs to prevent him from escaping. Then seated on the ground the body of the *nkumu* would be placed on the knees of this one, whose arms would be placed round the *nkumu* and securely fastened by driving a peg right through both wrists. Sometimes two *nkil* were thus used. If the number of victims was sufficient, others would be buried alive too, being placed in the grave in the recumbent *nkumu* position, with the corpse on top of them, its weight being sufficient, with the earth filling in the grave, to prevent escape. The *nkumu* was now ready for burial and was placed in the crypt, facing west.[2] The relatives of the *nkumu* approach, they pluck the leaves and stem of a juicy bush known as *mokaka* and chewing it, expectorate ceremonially on the body while they address it in language somewhat as follows: 'You are going to leave us now, we are mourning, for you were a good and wise man, your discernment in matters of justice was without parallel, &c. . . . we wish that you may be happy where you go, have many wives, beget many children, luck not for most. But don't take with you our power to beget children, leave us also some of this wisdom of yours, for what you were, we would be.' This prayer over, the *nkumu* would be slipped off the head of the corpse and replaced by the informal hat, all done so decorously that the bare head was not seen. The entrance to the

[1] The body was supposed to have remained in state for seven or nine days, but actually it was buried privately soon after death, a dummy being set up with the *nkumu* on its head, and the succeeding ceremonies being conducted with only the dummy in the place of the actual body. The inland villages however did allow the body to remain unburied for the long period, the seven being found to keep vermin in the store house. The Bongonda buried their *nkumu* generally in their houses or the spot where they had been accustomed to rest, burying the deceased at some other spot further off.

[2] All burials have particular regard to this east-west position, those buried to the circumference position having the feet to the west. The native explanation is that this allows the spirit of the departed to follow the path of the setting sun.

crypt would then be barred by men in order to leave it as a hollow chamber, and the hole leading down to it filled in with earth.

For a month or two after the burial the festivities and orgies continued. Women would be hanged to create some diversion, but those hanged were not eaten. Decapitations would continue. According to the informants only slaves brought in from a distance would have to be tied to prevent their escape. The slave members of the household of the dead *nkumu* would await their turn stoically, content to die that they might accompany their master in his journey to the land of spirits. This may be true but scarcely seems possible. Still another diversion in the funeral orgies was killing in the manner known as *ewembe*. If some man who had a slave did not wish him to be hanged or beheaded, he might give him for this other method. As the weeks slipped by, such a one, his life having apparently been spared, would suppose that all was safe and that there was little chance of his being taken, and, thus emboldened, would, instead of keeping at a safe distance, join the crowd to watch a beheading. His death would be prearranged. At the moment of beheading a victim, someone would drive a spear into the unsuspecting man, the whole crowd then using spears and knives to stab and slash until he fell. Some might be tortured to death by being buried up to the neck and left thus exposed to the hot sun without food or water until death intervened, but this was not a common practice at such funerals.

The termination of the dead *nkumu's* affairs took place when the division of the inheritance was made, a long and complicated process.

Such were the old days before European penetration. The advent of the white man half a century ago was the beginning of the end. The ceremonies had to be given up, though reluctantly. Occasionally cow goats are beheaded in place of human victims, and many of the younger generation find that, even so, the sight is more than they can endure, and they seek refuge elsewhere. *Nkumu* are not anxious for the honours. They find little or no respect paid to them by the government officials and this is a distinct obstacle to their obtaining honour from their own people. When the *nkumu* resident in the village adjacent to the mission station died, one of the Natives was asked who would be next. The reply was that probably no one would appear as a successor. Asked why, he answered, 'There are too many mourners.' He meant that too many were adopting the ways of the white man to make the inauguration of another *nkumu* a success. In his one useful function, that of judge, the paramount chief now takes his place, cases tried must be recorded by a clerk of the court, and fines paid into the treasury of the district*ery*. With such a state of affairs the old ways drop into desuetude, and the younger generation grow up knowing less of the ways of their fathers as the years pass.